

Remarks

Claims 1-2 and 6-13 are currently pending. Claims 3-5 have been withdrawn from consideration in the present application. The independent claims are claims 1, 2, and 6. Claims 12 and 13 depend from claim 1, and claims 7-11 depend from claim 6. Claims 1, 6 and 12 have been amended herein, and claim 13 is a new claim.

Claims 1, 12 and 13

The Examiner has rejected claims 1 and 12 as being anticipated by Lykken et al. Applicant respectfully traverses that ground for rejection. The Examiner's assertion that Lykken shows a top tandem arm that "clearly pivots relative to the vehicle frame about both a horizontal and vertical axis" is not entirely understood. Lykken does disclose a middle frame 48 that is pivotally connected to the front 44 and rear 46 frames. This middle frame is connected to the front and rear frames by flexible couplings 70 and 72 that permit pivotal movement between the middle frame and the front and rear frames in primarily a horizontal plane. (Lykken col. 2, lines 32-38 and 52-57). Clearly, the top tandem arm 102 of Lykken is not pivotally connected to the front or rear frames. See Lykken col 2, lines 23-30. Therefore, it appears that the Examiner is asserting that the top tandem arm 102 of Lykken is pivotally connected to the middle frame 48 via the flexible couplings 70 or 72.

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the frame being referred to in the claim is the frame that includes tensioning structure. Lykken clearly does not correspond to the claim as amended. As such, the rejection of claim 1 as being anticipated by Lykken should be withdrawn, and claims 1, 12 and 13 should be allowed. Applicant also reserves the right to establish that his invention predates the Lykken reference.

Claims 6-11

The Examiner has rejected claims 6-11 as being anticipated by Gignac. Claim 6 has been amended herein to require that the first tandem arm supports both the first idler wheel structure and the first wheel. This feature of the present invention ties the first idler wheel to the first wheel such that they pivot together about the first pivot axis. Gignac does not disclose any such feature. Gignac does not include a pivotal tandem arm that supports both an idler wheel structure and one of the wheels. Therefore, the rejection of claims 6-11 should be withdrawn.

The Examiner has already indicated that claim 2 is allowed, for which the applicant thanks the Examiner.

Conclusion

In light of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1, 2, and 6-13 should be allowed.

Respectfully submitted,

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